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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SA, SA/INS AND G/IWI FOR KHADIAGALA
NSC FOR DORMANDY

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MALDIVES: CHILD MARRIAGE NOT COMMON

REF: STATE 36341

1. SUMMARY. CHILD MARRIAGE IS NOT A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES. UNDER CIVIL LAW, THE LEGAL AGE OF MARRIAGE IN MALDIVES IS 18 YEARS OLD, WHICH APPLIES TO BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS. HOWEVER, UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, A FATHER MAY REQUEST THE COURT TO WED TWO PEOPLE BELOW THIS AGE. STATISTICS ARE NOT CURRENT BUT INSTANCES OF CHILD MARRIAGE ARE INFREQUENT SINCE THE FAMILY CODE WENT INTO EFFECT IN 2001. END SUMMARY.

2. ANSWERS TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS POSED BY REFTTEL FOLLOW:

A. THE FAMILY CODE, IN EFFECT SINCE 2001, SETS THE LEGAL AGE OF MARRIAGE IN MALDIVES FOR BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS AT 18 YEARS OLD. A FATHER MAY PETITION THE COURT TO WED COUPLES BELOW THIS AGE UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

B. UNDERAGE MARRIAGE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES IS NOT A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM IN THE POPULATION AT LARGE OR IN SPECIFIC ETHNIC OR MINORITY GROUPS.

C. THERE ARE NO U.S. FUNDED INITIATIVES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES THAT AIM TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OR ADDRESS EFFECTS OF CHILD MARRIAGE.

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